



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

1 May 2015

The 127th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 127th Legislature:


Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 435, "An Act To Extend the Protection of Municipal Shellfish Conservation Programs."

This bill would extend a pilot project that authorized municipal predator control so that municipalities could study ways of controlling the effects of green crabs on soft shell clams. On April 5, 2014, the original legislation authorizing this pilot project became law without my signature. Since that time, municipalities have had the authority to conduct this pilot program. Now proponents of this bill want to extend the pilot until November 1, 2016. The pilot project has been conducted and the data has been gathered. Let's react to the data, not simply continue to extend this pilot ad infinitum.

Moreover, I have heard from proponents of this bill that municipalities have invested in seeding efforts in anticipation of this pilot project being extended. That is unfortunate that these decisions were made before the legislation was enacted. More concerning, however, are seeding efforts taking place under the guise of this pilot project. This was a project to study predator control – not to provide protection for municipal seeding. What was contemplated was an inquiry into predator control and not simply making flats inaccessible to some members of the marine economy to the benefit of others.

Again, we have conducted the pilot. Now is the time to react to the information we have learned, not simply dither. For this reason, I return LD 435 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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